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STATE FOR CHRIS THOMAS AND DANO WILUSZ

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SUBJECT: HIGHLIGHTING MALARIA AWARENESS DAY IN GHANA - APRIL 25

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¶1. Ghana celebrated Africa malaria day on April 25, 2007 with a variety of activities supported by the Government of Ghana, health development partners including the USG mission as well the local NGO community and private sector. The events carried out are part of an ongoing effort to raise awareness as well as mobilize the general population to take an active role in the fight against malaria.

¶2. Leading up to Africa malaria day, the first national malaria seminar for the business sector in Ghana was held on April 18 in Accra. Approximately 50 companies were represented at this event, which highlighted the negative economic impacts of malaria as well as steps, which businesses can take to protect their workforce and the general public against malaria. The USG mission assisted in planning and developing informational materials for the seminar.

¶3. On the morning of April 25, approximately 300 people marched through the central districts of Accra to show solidarity in the fight against malaria. Marchers included NGO representatives, Government of Ghana representatives, staff members from the national malaria control program, health workers, youth and other concerned citizens. A brass band and a squadron of insecticide spray men from Anglogold Ashanti (a leading mining company) added spirit and color to the march. U.S. mission personnel were among the marchers.

¶4. The National Africa malaria day durbar (a durbar is a type of outdoor public meeting) was held at the palace forecourt in the historic Jamestown neighborhood of Accra. Organized around the theme "leadership and partnership for results," the durbar featured music, dancing, and outdoor theater, as well as speeches by Ambassador Bridgewater, two Ministers, public health officials, the local traditional ruler, businesses, and many others. The USG mission contributed to planning and publicity for this event, which was attended by approximately 1000 people and received wide media coverage.

¶5. Smaller events were held outside of Accra, including a commemoration in the Brong Ahafo region organized by the Newmont mining company.

¶6. A stakeholders' forum for the President's Malaria Initiative (PMI) assembled on April 26, with 89 participants representing a wide range of organizations involved in fighting malaria, including public health bodies, international partners, clinicians, NGOs, research institutes, private businesses, etc. The PMI team and USAID/Ghana organized this successful forum.

Bridgewater